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When fortune smiles, take the money

By Review staff

A quick rule of thumb for matters of state and federal spending:

If it flows into your own district, it's "sound public investment in needed infrastructure and community development"; if it goes to someone else's district, it's "pork."

So while oinks of envy may be heard from other corners of the state, allow us to commend the good sense and fiscal prudence of the wise women and men of Olympia, in the priorities they established in the biennial capital budget for our fair Washington over the weekend. As reported Saturday, Bainbridge Island received ample favor in the just-completed session, thanks to the stalwart efforts of the local delegation.

Efforts to complete purchase of the erstwhile Wyckoff property at Bill Point were bolstered by some \$2.5 million, putting the community within about \$600,000 of establishing a Pritchard Park and Japanese American internment memorial there. The House version of the capital budget included zero dollars for the deal, so credit the work of a pair of freshmen, islander Phil Rockefeller in the Senate and Poulsbo legislator Sherry Appleton, for nursing the money into the reconciled budget document. Also included was some \$623,000 to complete purchase of the Close property on the island's southwest side, linking Gazzam Lake with the shoreline. All that's needed to finish that deal is another \$82,000, with several grant applications outstanding, the Bainbridge Island Land Trust says. Finally, another \$350,000 total will flow to the Bainbridge Island Park and Recreation District and the Bainbridge Island Historical Society, to develop amenities at Blakely Harbor Park and fund various historical preservation efforts. Appleton also showed her mettle in securing money to address ecological health issues in Hood Canal. And we would be remiss if we didn't doff the editorial eyeshade to Rep. Bev Woods of Poulsbo, one of a handful of Republicans who voted for the statewide transportation package. Woods voted against the budget as a whole, a document over which reasonable people could certainly disagree. But having lost that one, she declined to engage in the petulance of some of her party colleagues, who said they wouldn't back the transportation package unless Democrats jettisoned tax increases in the operating budget. Woods supported the transportation package, which sends \$81 million toward Winslow ferry terminal improvements, and some \$200 million for other road and bridge projects around the 23rd District.

We concede that even a few of the locals may be unsold on the merits of Olympia's largesse in such challenging fiscal times. For those few, we would suggest that you try looking at it this way:

It may be pork, but by golly, it's our pork.

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